



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OPERATION ICE STORM
**THREE MORE DEFENDANTS PLEAD GUILTY TO ROLE
IN MULTI-KILO METH CONSPIRACY**

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced today that three more defendants have pleaded guilty in federal court for their roles in a conspiracy to distribute between five and 15 kilograms of methamphetamine. These convictions, Graves said, are the result of Operation Ice Storm, a long-term investigation into the illegal distribution of large quantities of methamphetamine in southwest Missouri.

Roy Rodriguez, 21, address unknown, pleaded guilty before U.S. Magistrate Judge James C. England this afternoon to participating in a conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine in Jasper County, Mo.

By pleading guilty today, **Rodriguez** admitted that he was involved in a conspiracy to distribute at least five kilograms, but less than 15 kilograms, of methamphetamine from August 2002 to Sept. 20, 2004. **Rodriguez** also admitted that he was in possession of a Titan .25-caliber handgun and five rounds of ammunition on Jan. 14, 2004, in connection with the drug trafficking offense.

Rodriguez also admitted that he assaulted a federal grand jury witness, for which he has been charged in a separate case. **Rodriguez** assaulted the witness, stole his car, and stole property from his car, Graves said, in retaliation for that witness' testimony about the drug trafficking conspiracy. Under the terms of today's plea agreement, **Rodriguez** agrees to pay restitution to that victim and agrees that, at the time of sentencing, he should be subject to a sentencing enhancement for obstruction of justice. In exchange, the government will dismiss the federal indictment in that separate case.

Rodriguez also agreed that he should be subject to a sentencing enhancement for obstruction of justice because he led law enforcement officers on a high-speed pursuit on May

19, 2005, as he fled to avoid arrest. **Rodriguez** also attempted to flee from officers attempting to arrest him on June 17, 2005, when he struck an officer's patrol car with his vehicle, thereby causing damage to the patrol car.

Under federal statutes, **Rodriguez** could be subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in federal prison without parole, up to life in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$4 million. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

Rodriguez is the sixth defendant to plead guilty to charges contained in an Oct. 14, 2004, federal indictment.

Marcus Glover, 26, of Joplin, Mo., and **Victor M. Gomez-Coronado**, 34, a citizen of Mexico, have also recently pleaded guilty to participating in the methamphetamine conspiracy. **Glover** pleaded guilty on Jan. 26, 2006, and **Gomez-Coronado** pleaded guilty on Jan. 11, 2006. The government contends that **Gomez-Coronado** was a leader of the drug trafficking organization, and that he possessed a firearm in connection to the drug trafficking offense.

* **Ronald D. Preston**, 34, of Joplin, was sentenced on Nov. 10, 2005, to 15 years and eight months in federal prison without parole. On April 13, 2005, **Preston** pleaded guilty to his role in the conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine.

* **Jacquelyn M. Witt**, 21, of Carthage, Mo., pleaded guilty on April 18, 2005, to her role in the conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine.

* **Amy C. Lawrence**, 22, of Joplin, pleaded guilty on July 8, 2005, to her role in the conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robyn L. McKee. The case was investigated by the Jasper County Drug Task Force, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Joplin, Mo., Police Department, the Carthage, Mo., Police Department, the Jasper County, Mo., Sheriff's Department, the Jasper County, Mo., Metropolitan Police Department, the Carterville, Mo., Police Department, the Newton County, Mo., Sheriff's Department, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, the Central Oklahoma Metro Interdiction Team and the Texas Department of Public Safety.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

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